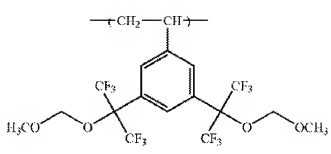
REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10 and 11 have been amended. Support for the subject matter of these claims can be found in the specification at least at pages 1, 2 and 7. New Claims 13-20 have been added. Support for the subject matter of these claims can be found in the specification at least at pages 9-33. No new matter has been added and entry is respectfully requested. After entry of the above amendments, Claims 1-20 are pending.

Claims 1-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over European Patent Publication No. 1341038 to Sasaki et al. or its U.S. equivalent, U.S. Patent No. 7,108,951 (hereinafter referred to as "Sasaki"). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Citations below are to the EP publication.

The Official Action is relying upon the disclosure in Sasaki of photosensitive resin compositions comprising a resin and a compound capable of generating an acid. According to the Official Action, the resin has recurring units "meeting the structural limitations of the instant formulas I-1 and I-2" (page 2 of the Official Action). The Official Action specifically refers to Sample j-29 of Sasaki. Example j-29 of Sasaki includes polymer (22) [Table 2, page 101 of Sasaki] which comprises recurring unit (II)-7 [Table 1, page 99 of Sasaki]. Recurring unit (II)-7 has a structure as set forth below [page 19 of Sasaki]:

(II)-7



Accordingly, the polymer used in Example j-29 of Sasaki includes an aromatic ring. Independent Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10 and 11, however, recite that *the resin does not comprise an aromatic ring*. In addition, Sasaki includes the following disclosures:

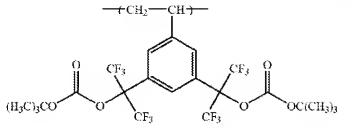
[0007] Further, as resist compositions for exposure by ArF excimer laser beams (193 nm), there have been developed chemically amplified resists using an acid-decomposable resin in which an alicyclic structure not having absorption at 193 nm is introduced into a main chain or side chains of the polymer.

[0008] It has become clear that as to F_2 excimer layer beams (157 nm), the foregoing alicyclic type resins have large absorption in, a region of 157 nm and are insufficient for obtaining the desired patterns of 0.1 μm or less - On the other hand, *Proc. SPIE.*, Vol. 3678, p.13 (1999) reports that resins having a fluorine atom (perfluoro structure) introduced thereinto have sufficient transparency at 157 nm. Structures of effective fluorocarbon resins are proposed in, for example, *Proc. SPIE.*, Vol. 3999, p.330 (2000), *ibid.*, p.357 (2000) and *ibid.*, p.365 (2000), and WO 00/17712, and resist compositions containing a fluorine-containing resin are being investigated.

[0010] Accordingly, an object of the invention is to provide a photosensitive resin composition suitable for use of an exposure light source of 160 nm or less, especially F_2 excimer laser beams (157 nm) . Specifically, an object of the invention is to provide a positive-working resin composition showing sufficient transparency during the use of a light source of 157 nm, having high sensitivity and high resolution, and having superior coating properties.

Therefore, Sasaki teaches away from the use of resins having alicyclic structures in the main or side chains. Further, each of the monomers disclosed in Sasaki and relied upon in the Official Action as allegedly corresponding to formula (I-1) of the present claims (i.e., F29 to F33 and F-35 to F-38) is used in the examples of Sasaki in a polymer comprising a recurring unit having an aromatic ring. In particular, as set forth in Table 1 of Sasaki, polymer (13) of Sasaki includes a recurring unit derived from F29 and a recurring unit derived from monomer (II)-3 which also comprises an aromatic ring as shown below [page 19 of Sasaki]:

(II)-3



In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10 and 11 are patentable over Sasaki. Claims 3, 4, 7, 9 and 12 each depend from one of these claims and are therefore also patentable over Sasaki for at least the reasons set forth above. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 13-20 have been added. These claims are also patentable over the cited references. In particular, the present application is a National Stage application which claims the benefit of Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-315021 which was filed on October 29, 2002. A Certified English language translation of the JP 2002-315021 priority document was submitted on April 25, 2007. Accordingly, the priority benefit claim to the JP 2002-315021 priority document has been perfected. In addition, each of Claims 13-20 has full written support in the JP 2002-315021 priority document (see, for example, paragraphs [0008]-[0048] of the certified English language translation of JP 2002-315021). Sasaki EP is available as a reference under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as of September 3, 2003. Sasaki US is available as a reference under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as of February 26, 2003. Accordingly, neither of the Sasaki references is available as a reference for Claims 13-20.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

MORRIS, MANNING & MARTIN, LLP

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Date

/Christopher W. Raimund/
Christopher W. Raimund
Registration No. 47,258

City Center Building
1401 H Street, N.W., Suite 760
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone No. (202) 408-5153
Facsimile No. (202) 408-5146